(d) whether the programme designed to remove regional disparities has not achieved the desired results; and

(e) if so, the precautions taken to avoid lacunae in implementation of the programme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI YOGINDER K. ALAGH) : (a) to (e) The planning and development of an area and allocation of funds for that purpose is primarily the responsibility of the State Government. Planning Commission have not identified any areas as backward *per-se*. However, Central Government is supplementing the efforts of the State Governments in this regard through the mechanism of transfer of resources under the formula used for giving normal Central Assistance to States; Special Area Programmes such as Tribal Sub-plan, Drought Prone Area Programme, Desert Development Programme, Hill Area Development Programme and Border Area Development Programme etc; and rural employment schemes such as Integrated Rural Development Programme, Jawahar Rojgar Yojana and Employment Assistance Scheme.

Removal of regional disparities in an essential objective of the planning process. However, the implementation of this objective is tempered by certain inherent historic and other characteristics of various regions such as differences in resource endowment, physiographic factors and geographical conditions.

Orphanages

* 528. SHRI MAHESH KUMAR M. KANODIA: Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of orphanages receiving financial assistance form the Union Government in the country at present, State-wise;

(b) the criteria fixed for giving financial assistance to them;

(c) the amount allocated for the orphanages during 1995 and 1996, State-wise; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government of ensure proper utilization of the amount allocated for the purpose?

THE MINISTER OF WELFARE (SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA) : (a) The Ministry of Welfare is not implementing any scheme of running orphanages. However, 51 children Homes have been receiving grants-in-aid under the 'Shishu Greha Scheme' run by NGOs for promoting in-country adoption.

(b) to (d) Statement is enclosed.

Statement

The Shishu Greh Scheme of Government of India from 1992-93, meant for promotion of in-country adoption of orphaned, abandoned, destitute and neglected children is implemented through NGOs. The financial assistance is provided to voluntary agencies for maintenance of children of the age group of 0-6 years for their placement with Indian families through adoption, as per provisions of the scheme.

Financial assistance to meet the recurring and non-recurring expenditure to the extent of 90% of the total expenditure is provided to voluntary organisation/NGOs as per provisions of the scheme.

As the scheme is implemented through NGOs funds are not allocated State-wise under the scheme, but release of funds depends on receipt of applications in this regard as per provisions of the scheme. The grant is sanctioned to Voluntary Organisations directly. Annual allocation for the year 1994-95, 1995-96 and 1996-97 is as under :

Year	Amount
1994-95	Rs. 55 lakhs
1995-96	Rs. 100 lakhs
1996-97	Rs. 100 lakhs

In order to monitor the progress of implementation, performance and proper utilisation of grants, the following steps are taken by the Ministry :

(i) Half yearly progress reports from voluntary agencies/Shishu Grehs;

(ii) Inspection by State Government officers and their annual recommendations without which 2nd instalment is not released; and

(iii) Annual Audited Statement of Accounts and utilisation certificate of funds provided by the voluntary agencies before further release of funds.

[English]

Death of Tribals

* 529. SHRI KODIKUNNIL SURESH : Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of Adivasis (Scheduled Tribes) who died due to poverty during the last two years, State-wise;

(b) whether the Government of India have taken any steps for stopping poverty deaths of Adivasis all over the country; and